

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 06466 082010Z
ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 DEAE-00 MED-03 L-03
/038 W

-----120316 091632Z /45

R 081832Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4869
USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS MADRID 06466

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, SP
SUBJECT: AVAILABILITY OF LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS
TO AMERICANS TRAVELLING ABROAD

REF: 77 STATE 255976; MADRID 4317; STATE 99011

1. SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT'S REQUEST
(77 STATE 255976) EMBASSY HAS CONTACTED SPANISH HEALTH
OFFICIALS SEVERAL TIMES WITH REGARD TO AVAILABILITY OF
LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS FOR AMERICANS TRAVELLING
ABROAD. EMBASSY HAS NOW BEEN INFORMED THAT SPANISH LAWS
DO NOT INCLUDE ANY PROVISIONS FOR EITHER PERMITTING
FOREIGNERS TO IMPORT LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS OR
SUPPLYING THESE MEDICATIONS FROM SPANISH PHARMACIES.
SPANISH OFFICIALS RECOMMENDED THAT TOPIC BE DISCUSSED
IN CONTEXT OF UN DIVISION OF NARCOTICS DRUGS WITH VIEW
TO POSSIBLE ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL CARNET
FOR TRAVELLERS REQUIRING THESE MEDICATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF MET ON JUNE 7 WITH DR. OCTAVIO AGUAR,
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH ON THE INTER.
MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ("GABINETE") ON NARCOTICS CONTROL
PROBLEMS. DR. AGUAR APOLOGIZED FOR NOT REPLYING EARLIER
TO THE EMBASSY'S NOVEMBER 1977 REQUEST ON SUBJECT.
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HOWEVER, HE EXPLAINED THAT THE SPANISH NARCOTICS APPARATUS
ESPECIALLY ON THE DEMAND CONTROL SIDE, WAS STILL IN STAGE
OF ORGANIZATION AND OBTAINING DEFINITIVE POLICY ON
NARCOTICS MATTERS WAS NOT EASY' AGUAR SAID THAT HE HAD
CHECKED THOROUGHLY WITH ALL ELEMENTS OF THE SPANISH
GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, AND THE CONCLUSION IS THAT SPANISH
LAW DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY WAY TO PERMIT FOREIGNERS TO

IMPORT LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS' AS FOR ARRANGING SUPPLIES FROM SPANISH PHARMACIES DURING A TEMPORARY VISIT TO SPAIN, AGUAR SAID THIS WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT EXCEPT IN SUCH CENTRAL CITIES AS MADRID AND BARCELONA.

3. DR. AGUAR SUGGESTED THAT THIS TOPIC WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR DISCUSSION UNDER UN AUSPICES, SINCE IT IS NOT JUST A BILATERAL PROBLEM BUT INVOLVES ALL COUNTRIES TO SOME DEGREE. ACCORDING TO DR. AGUAR THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT DOES USE SOME TYPE OF IDENTITY CARD FOR SPANISH NATIONALS WHO REQUIRE LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS. HE SUGGESTED THAT AN INTERNATIONAL CARNET OF SOME FORM MIGHT BE DEVELOPED FOR ISSUANCE TO TRAVELLERS WHO ARE IN THE SAME SITUATION. THIS CARNET WOULD THEN BE VALID IN ALL COUNTRIES AND WOULD OBVIATE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NUMEROUS BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY CANNOT JUDGE MERITS OF DR. AGUAR'S SUGGESTION, BUT FROM OUR LIMITED VANTAGE POINT IT WOULD APPEAR WORTH SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. AS U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE FREQUENTLY EMPHASIZED NARCOTICS PROBLEMS ARE SPREAD WORLDWIDE AND OPTIMUM SOLUTIONS WILL MOST LIKELY BE FOUND THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION. DR. AGUAR VOLUNTEERED TO PROVIDE "SPECIAL ASSISTANCE" IF EMBASSY HAD ANY CASES OF HIGH LEVEL VISITORS, "SUCH AS IMPORTANT DIPLOMATS", WHO DESIRED TO VISIT SPAIN AND WHO REQUIRED LEGALLY UNCLASSIFIED

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CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS. EMBOFF EXPRESSED APPRECIATION BUT SAID WE DID NOT ANTICIPATE SUCH NEED. EATON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, MEDICAL CARE, TOURISM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MADRID06466
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780241-1238
Format: TEL
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780682/aaaacsfb.tel
Line Count: 96
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6e2b408f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SNM
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 255976, 78 MADRID 4317, 78 STATE 99011
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2439962
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AVAILABILITY OF LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS TO AMERICANS TRAVELLING ABROAD
TAGS: SNAR, SP
To: STATE GENEVA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6e2b408f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014